

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 /090 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7963

INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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GENEVA FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH PRESS ON GENEVA TALKS

1. THE RETURN TO LONDON OF MR. IVOR RICHARD PUTS THE GENEVA CONFERENCE BACK AMONG THE MAIN NEWS STORIES.
2. THE GENERAL VIEW IS THAT OPINION IN GENEVA IS GLOOMY BUT THAT MR. RICHARD WILL MAKE A LAST ATTEMPT TO PERSUADE THE BLACK LEADERS OF BRITAIN'S GOOD FAITH.
3. TIMES DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT DAVID SPANIER (LEAD STORY - MONDAY): "FACED WITH CONTINUING DEADLOCK AT THE RHODESIA CONFERENCE IN GENEVA, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FACES A HARSH CHOICE THIS WEEK: WHETHER TO CALL OFF THE

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CONFERENCE AS A FAILURE AND ASSUME DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY

FOR RHODESIA'S FUTURE, OR TO MAKE NEW PROPOSALS BASED ON ACTIVE BRITISH PARTICIPATION IN THE PROPOSED INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN SALISBURY.... MR. RICHARD WILL HAVE ONE LAST TRY AT PERSUADING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERS OF BRITAIN'S GOOD FAITH. ONE WAY MIGHT BE TO SET A DATE FOR THE ELECTIONS FOR MAJORITY RULE. IF MR. RICHARD IS SUCCESSFUL--AND OPINION IN GENEVA IS DISTINCTLY GLOOMY, THOUGH NOT WITHOUT SOME HOPE--THE GOVERNMENT PLAN IS THAT THE CONFERENCE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY GET ON TO DISCUSSING THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES OF THE FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. IF MR. RICHARD FAILS TO PERSUADE THE AFRICANS TO MOVE, HOWEVER, IT MIGHT SEEM PREFERABLE TO BRING THE CONFERENCE TO AN END FORTHWITH.... BRITISH THINKING NOW APPEARS TO BE MOVING TOWARDS FAR MORE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT THAN PREVIOUSLY ASSUMED."

4. TIMES EDITORIAL (MONDAY): "MR. IVOR RICHARD'S VISIT TO LONDON THIS WEEKEND EVIDENTLY PRESAGES A CRITICAL CABINET DISCUSSION ON THE ROLE THAT BRITAIN IS TO PLAY IN THE INTERIM PERIOD BEFORE RHODESIA GETS ITS INDEPENDENCE AFTER AN ELECTION THAT INAUGURATES BLACK MAJORITY RULE. AT GENEVA, THOUGH SOME HOPEFUL NOISES HAVE BEEN MADE, THE DEADLOCK OVER THE DATE OF INDEPENDENCE PERSISTS. THIS IS NOW ONLY THE OSTENSIBLE PROBLEM. THE REAL PROBLEM IS HOW THE TRANSFER TO AN AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS TO BE EFFECTED... THE INTRODUCTION OF...A BRITISH PRESENCE REQUIRES THE FULFILLMENT OF OTHER CONDITIONS. MR. SMITH, HIS COLLEAGUES AND PARTY MACHINE MUST AGREE TO GO QUIETLY AND (PERHAPS IN EXCHANGE FOR IMMUNITY) KEEP SILENT THEREAFTER. THE REST OF WHITE RHODESIA, BUT MORE PARTICULARLY THE SECURITY FORCES, MUST ACCEPT THE NEW COMPOSITE AUTHORITY. THE OTHER CONDITION IS THAT THE AFRICAN LEADERS SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO BIND THE GUERRILLA LEADERSHIP TO THE AGREEMENT. OTHERWISE BRITAIN WOULD HAVE TO TAKE CHARGE OF AN ANTI-TERRORIST CAMPAIGN WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY ORGANIZING THE CIVIL TRANSFER OF POWER. BRITAIN'S AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE A TEMPORARY SOVEREIGN RESPONSIBILITY MUST AT LEAST BE SUBJECT TO A CLAUSE THAT IF ANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS MAKE THE EXERCISE OF THAT RESPONSIBILITY IMPOSSIBLE, THE AR-

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RANGEMENT LAPSES--PERHAPS IN FAVOR OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL. WHETHER BRITAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY COULD JURIDICALLY SPEAKING BE REDUCED TO A LIMITED AGENCY CONTRACT WITH PENALTY AND WITHDRAWAL CLAUSES MAY DECIDE ITS PRACTICABILITY AS A WAY OF ENDING THE DEADLOCK. BUT TO AVOID RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COLLAPSE OF THE CONFERENCE AT THIS STAGE, THE UNWELCOME EXPLORATION OF SUCH AN INITIATIVE MAY BE FORCED ON THE GOVERNMENT."

5. GUARDIAN GENEVA CORRESPONDENT JAMES MACMANUS (MONDAY):

"THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT DELEGATIONS AT THE RHODESIA CONFERENCE IN GENEVA SEEM TO BE MOVING TOWARDS TENTATIVE AGREEMENT ON A DATE FOR THE TERRITORY'S INDEPENDENCE.... THOUGH THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES (BRITAIN AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT) REMAINS, THE DIVIDE HAS NARROWED TO A POINT WHERE THE CONFERENCE

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MIGHT PROCEED TO ITS BELATED SECOND STAGE.... GIVEN THE CONTINUING OBDURACY OF BOTH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND THE BRITISH, THIS MAY PROVE FALSE PROPHECY, HOWEVER. INDEED, EVEN IF THE NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED TO DISCUSSION ON THE NATURE OF A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT IN SALISBURY THE PROS-

PECTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE ARE PROBABLY WORSE NOW THAN THEY WERE TWO WEEKS AGO. RELIABLE REPORTS INDICATE THAT EVEN IF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ALLOWS THE MEETING TO PROCEED, IT WILL ONLY BE BECAUSE IT WISHES TO TAKE AN UNBENDING STAND ON THE ISSUE OF A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT."

6. FINANCIAL TIMES CORRESPONDENT BRIDGET BLOOM IN GENEVA (MONDAY): "...OBSERVERS IN GENEVA AND LONDON, SEE (RICHARD'S) CONSULTATIONS (IN LONDON) AS CRITICAL."  
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7. DAILY TELEGRAPH CORRESPONDENT JOHN MILLER: "THE FUTURE OF THE DEADLOCKED GENEVA CONFERENCE ON RHODESIA COULD BE DECIDED TODAY AT LIGHTENING TALKS AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE BETWEEN MR. CROSLAND, THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, AND MR. IVOR RICHARD...."

8. DAILY TELEGRAPH CORRESPONDENT CHRISTOPHER MUNNION IN SALISBURY: "RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCES ARE PREPARED FOR ANY EXTENSION OF THE CONFLICT AGAINST NATIONALIST GUERRILLAS, INCLUDING THE DIRECT INVOLVEMENT OF CUBAN TROOPS, SENIOR MILITARY SOURCES SAID YESTERDAY."

9. SUNDAY TIMES EDITORIAL: "BLACK RHODESIANS ARE UNDERSTANDABLY MISTRUSTFUL OF THE USE TO WHICH MR. SMITH AND HIS MEN MIGHT PUT THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD BEFORE MAJORITY RULE.... THE WAY ROUND THIS DIFFICULTY COULD BE FOUND BY BRITAIN OFFERING TO SUPPLY THE GOVERNOR, OR HEAD OF STATE...TO HOLD THE RING DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD... IT IS TOO SOON, IN THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS IN GENEVA, FORMALLY TO TABLE THIS PROPOSAL. BUT THE FOREIGN OFFICE SHOULD NOW BE ACTIVELY THINKING ABOUT IT AND AIRING IT, FOR IT MAY PROVE TO BE THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN THIS LAST GREAT EFFORT OF BRITISH DECOLONIZATION IN AFRICA."

10. SUNDAY TELEGRAPH LEAD STORY: "CUBA YESTERDAY PLEDGED UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT TO MOZAMBIQUE FOR THE 'HEROIC STRUGGLE...AGAINST THE ATTACKS BY THE RACIST FORCES OF... SOUTHERN RHODESIA'. IN SALISBURY, OBSERVERS WERE PREDICTING THAT THE CUBANS MIGHT SEND TO MOZAMBIQUE AN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH HELPED INSTALL THE MARXIST MPLA IN ANGOLA LAST YEAR."

11. GUARDIAN (SATURDAY) SALISBURY CORRESPONDENT HENRY MILLER: "RHODESIA CAN EXPECT WESTERN SUPPORT, INCLUDING MILITARY SUPPLIES, IF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE COLLAPSES THROUGH NO FAULT OF THE RHODESIA GOVERNMENT,...SMITH SAID.... THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT, HOWEVER, DENIED THAT

THERE WERE ANY SECRET AGREEMENTS WITH RHODESIA AND (SAID)  
THAT MR. SMITH WAS MISTAKEN IF HE THOUGHT THERE WAS AN  
UNDERSTANDING THAT HE COULD GET AMERICAN ARMS." (THE  
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OTHER QUALITY PAPERS ALSO REPORT THE STATE DEPARTMENT  
DENIAL.)

12. GUARDIAN (SATURDAY) GENEVA CORRESPONDENT JAMES  
MACMANUS: "THE NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA HAVE VIRTUALLY  
COME TO A HALT WHILE THE TWO PATRIOTIC FRONT DELEGATIONS..  
HAVE ENGAGED IN A TORTUOUS AND PROTRACTED INTERNAL DEBATE  
AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THEY SHOULD ABANDON THE CONFERENCE  
OVER THE (INDEPENDENCE) DATE ISSUE. IT HAS BECOME CLEAR  
THAT, WHILE MR. MUGABE IS IN FAVOR OF THIS DRASTIC  
ACTION, MR. NKOMO FEELS HE HAD MUCH MORE TO LOSE FROM A  
WALKOUT."

13. DAILY TELEGRAPH (SATURDAY) CORRESPONDENT DAVID  
ADAMSON IN GENEVA: "THE TWO HALVES OF THE PATRIOTIC  
FRONT...HAVE SO FAR BEEN UNABLE TO RESOLVE THEIR DIF-  
FERENCES OVER THEIR RESPONSE TO THE BRITISH PROPOSALS FOR  
ENDING THE DEADLOCK ON THE DAY OF RHODESIA'S INDE-  
PENDENCE."

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## Message Attributes

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